

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 12-17 are pending, with claims 13 and 15 remaining withdrawn pursuant to an Election of Species requirement. Claims 12, 14, 16 and 17 were rejected as being anticipated by Jang '088. In particular, the Examiner argues that Fig. 8F illustrates the claimed configuration of S-shaped connectors. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Figs. 8F and 8G are reproduced and attached to the end of this response. Fig. 8G is an enlarged view of the connecting strut of the various Figs. 8 and illustrates both the shape of the strut and the manner of connection in more detail.

As can be seen both in Fig. 8F and particularly in Fig. 8G, the connecting strut simply does not have an S-shape. Equally important, while it might be argued that the proximal end 162 of the strut, as best seen in Fig. 8G, emerges laterally from the adjacent cylindrical wall section, the distal section 168 clearly emerges axially from the opposite cylindrical wall section. Thus, it is not understood how the structure can be read on either independent claim 1 or 17 in the present application.

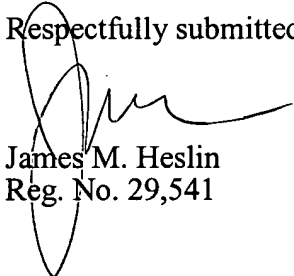
In an effort to expedite prosecution, and to clarify that both ends of the S-shaped connectors of the present invention must emerge laterally from the adjacent wall section, each claim has been amended to specifically recite that the "first and second ends of the S-shaped connectors **each** emerge laterally from the wall section . . ." With such clarification, it is believed that the teachings of Jang '088 are clearly avoided.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants believe that all pending claims are allowable over the art. In particular, Applicants note that in view of the believed allowability of independent claim 1, each of non-elected claims 13 and 15 should be examined and would be found allowable.

If for any reason the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would in any way expedite prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (650) 326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments: *Fig. 8F and Fig. 8G*
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